

Plan to Cut Parking Is Under Study

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Officials of the White House Office of Management and Budget are dusting off a proposal, first circulated last April, to do away with free and low-cost parking for federal employees.

The plan is designed to cut down on commuting and to save money spent, or proposed to be spent, on leasing spaces.

"Most of the administrative officers of the major departments oppose it. They're worried about keeping their employees," said a Transportation Department official. "The policy and planning people think it's a good idea."

But the official added, "OMB is keen on this proposal. It seems to me that it will be promulgated."

In this area, there are 102,600 federal employees using 64,100 free and cut-rate parking spaces. Employees would pay from \$20 to \$45 a month under the commercial rates that OMB wants. A Department of Transportation study a year ago estimated that \$10 million could be raised by the government if the parking subsidies were dropped here.

The OMB proposal would apply at federal installations across the country, wherever the government decided that mass transportation was an alternative available to employees.

Jim Curry, the OMB official responsible for the proposal, said the delay in implementing the plan is due to a change of leadership at OMB. Roy L. Ash, the new head of OMB, and his deputy, Fred Malek, will soon be briefed, Curry said.

The proposal stems from the decision in 1970 by the Transportation Department to lease parking space in the private Nassif building, 7th and D Streets SW, setting a precedent. Previously, it had been widely held that agencies could not lease parking in buildings they did not own.

Employees in other agencies began demanding the same treatment, Curry said, causing to such leasing pending further study.

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